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In view of the above considerations, there is surely no sufficient reason for assuming that the preformative **נ** is dropped in the 1st pers., sing., impf., Qāl of the **נ"ב** verbs. On the contrary, we should hold with most authorities,¹ that the radical **נ** is elided.

The fuller explanation of this form requires more than the above. The first person is to be carefully distinguished from the second and third; for the steps in its development are not the same as those in the forms of the other persons. Quite another law obtains here, that of the dissimilation of the initial and final sounds of the syllable.² By reason of this the **נ** as the closing sound was dropped, and the preformative, being in an open syllable, was lengthened to **â**, and this latter obscured to **ô**. These changes must have taken place very early,—anterior, it would seem, to the development of the Sh'vâ mobile³ and of the tendency to the deflection of **â** to **ë** under **נ**, both of which characterize the Hebrew and Aramaic branches. Indeed it is probable that in this form of the verbs **נ"ב**, the radical **נ** was never heard in the Hebrew and, consequently, was not written.

O. O. FLETCHER.

➤EDITORIAL NOTES.◄

Professor Strack's article on "Books for the study of the Neo-Hebraic Language" comes in quite opportunely. Many requests have been received by the American editor for just such information. These requests betoken an interest in this department of Hebrew study. Attention is invited to the care with which the edition, the number of pages, and the character of each book are given. May not American scholars learn much from the painstaking accuracy in matters of detail, which characterizes German scholars? For the translation of Dr. Strack's MS. we are indebted to Rev. O. O. Fletcher, Ottawa, Ill.

The study of alphabets is a distinct department of study, and one full of interest and importance. Not many Americans have gone into it very deeply. Among others may be mentioned the names of Dr. W. H. Ward, editor of *The Independent*, and Dr. J. P. Peters, of New York. Prof. Clarke, the author of the article on this subject in the present issue, has made it a life-long study. Only a few are in a position to criticize his results. Certainly all will enjoy this most readable article. The tables which accompany it have been prepared at great expense. This article, together with one published in *The Old Testament Student*, Vol. II., No. 10, will be reprinted in pamphlet form.

The article of Dr. Felsenthal on "Intermediate Syllables," is possibly more interesting and valuable for the information which it contains on Textual Criticism, than for what is said on the subject proper. After the careful handling of the theme here given, one must recognize that there is, to a great extent, lack of uniformity in the occurrence of such syllables. But with the following words from

¹See, for instance, Bickell's *Outlines of Hebrew Gram.* (Curtiss) §§ 36, 124; and Gesenius' *Gram.* 22d ed., and Strack, *Hebraeische Gram.* (Petermann series) *in loc.* ²For an ingenious application of this law to another and quite difficult question in Hebrew, see *OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT*, Vol. II., p. 25. ³Against this view, see Bickell's *Outlines of Hebrew Gram.* (Curtiss) § 36.

a letter written by Dr. F. we cannot entirely agree : “ What progress would be made by a German or a Frenchman beginning to learn English, if this beginner were to waste his time by thoroughly studying such questions as whether we should syllabify *ri-sing* or *ris-ing*? *La-bra-dor* or *Lab-ra-dor*? Life is short, and Hebrew philology is long. Other more important matters claim our time and attention, and therefore our time must not be taken up too much by such fruitless discussions.”

There is some force in this ; but would not the same objection hold against all matters of detail which were not of immediate practical importance? Now, whatever may be said of the undesirableness of instructing beginners in the minute details and exceptions of etymology and syntax, the questions of orthography sustain a different relation to his progress. It is absolutely essential to any respectable knowledge of the language that a person should be able to pronounce it with care and accuracy. That student who pronounces Hebrew without an intelligent understanding of the use of Dāghēsh-lene, pronounces neither easily nor accurately. And an intelligent understanding of Dāghēsh-lene cannot exist without a knowledge of the so-called intermediate or half-open syllable. Again, how much scientific interest is a student to be supposed to have who, when he has been taught that simple (or open) syllables, when unaccented, must have long vowels, and that a vocal Shṽâ cannot be found under the final consonant of a syllable, will pass such words as *וְיָהִי, בְּרֵנֶת*, etc., without a question? That the same word is written differently by different authors, or copied differently in different texts, is only a greater reason why the matter should be explained to the beginner, as soon as a sufficient number of instances have occurred to call his attention closely to it. So frequent is the occurrence of words containing this syllable, and so peculiar is it in view of the rules ordinarily laid down by grammarians, that very soon, in our opinion, should the student be taught its use. An average student, who has studied Hebrew two weeks, ought to be able to master the subject in an hour's study.

In a notice of *HEBRAICA*, published in *The Nation* (April 10th), there occur several statements to which it seems desirable to refer. Certainly the first number of the journal contains nothing to cause any careful reader to suppose that it was “ mainly intended for the benefit of a school for the study of Hebrew by correspondence.” Nothing has been published to this effect, nor does the material contained in the journal go to show this. It is true that the members of this school are required to subscribe for it, and it is equally true that without their support the journal could not be published. That, however, the above statement is incorrect will be seen 1) from the fact that for the members of this school a special Supplement is issued each month, which is not sent to other subscribers, and 2) from the wide scope of the journal, and the aims sought to be accomplished by its publication, as announced in the first number.

The statement that the number under review “ embraces some original matter of merit beside some notices copied from books and periodicals,” seems a little unfair in view of the fact that of twenty-four pages, *two* contained selections, and the remaining twenty-two, original matter.

If it is supposed that in America a journal of this nature can, at once, rank with similar German periodicals, there will be a measure of disappointment. As

a matter of fact, the public sentiment in reference to this kind of literature is yet to be formed. Can this be done in a month, or in a year?

The editors of *HEBRAICA* understand that it cannot immediately be made all that they desire. Time is needed to develop an interest, and to incite men to investigation in this department of study. Much has already been done. The "much" is, however, little, when compared with what yet remains. *HEBRAICA* needs the encouragement and support of all men interested in the higher lines of study. It is an undertaking beset with almost insuperable difficulties. Is it worthy of help? Does it deserve aid? If so, let this help be given. And, it may be added, the time for rendering aid is the present. A good word, a subscription-fee is of far more value now than at any future time. If the journal succeeds, help given later, though desirable, will not be so necessary. If the journal fails, such assistance will be valueless.

A uniform method of transliterating Hebrew words is desirable. No two grammarians agree exactly in the signs adopted. The following has been the system of the managing editor. For this system special type has been cast. That it might be improved in some respects is probable. **ץ** might better be transliterated by *c* with cedilla. Other minor changes might easily be suggested. The system will be accepted, however, as upon the whole satisfactory. Contributors, unless they distinctly express a desire to the contrary, will understand that this system will be employed in *HEBRAICA*. They are requested to conform, as far as possible, to this system in preparing articles.

CONSONANTS.

א	'	ו	v	ל	l	צ	ts
ב	bh	ז	z	מ	m	ק	q
ב	b	ח	h	נ	n	ר	r
ג	gh	ט	t	ס	s	ש	s
ג	g	י	y	ע	'	ש	sh
ד	dh	כ	kh	פ	ph	ת	th
ד	d	כ	k	פ	p	ת	t
ה	h						

VOWELS.

Originally long.	Tone-long.	Short.	Half.
ֶֿ	ֶֿ	ֶֿ	ֶֿ
ִֿ	ִֿ	ִֿ	ִֿ
ֶֿ	ֶֿ	ֶֿ	ֶֿ
ֶֿ	ֶֿ	ֶֿ	ֶֿ
ֶֿ	ֶֿ	ֶֿ	ֶֿ

Diphthong ֶֿ, as in נֶֿשֶׁה, é.

The originally long vowels are always marked with (˘) and the tone-long with (ˆ) whether the writing in Hebrew be full or defective.

The following forms are enclosed in parenthesis.

- (1) Quiescent א and ה. [Quiescent ו and י are regarded as expressed in the vowel.]

- (2) Pättāḥ-furtive and the helping pättāḥ in the Perf. 2 f. s. of verbs 'גuttural.
 (3) Letters retained simply for orthographical reasons, as ' in פִּנְיָ.

The syllable-divider is not represented.

Mäqqēph is represented by +.

The transliteration of Zeph. III., 8 furnishes an example of nearly every form.

lā-khēn ḥāk-kû+lî n'ûm+y'hô-vā(h)

l'yôm qû-mî l'ädh

kî mîsh-pā-tî lē-'šōph gô-yîm

l'qō-bh'tsî mām-lā-khōth

lîsh-pōkh 'alē-hēm zā'-mî

kōl ḥ'rôn 'āp-pî

kî b'ēsh qîn-'ā-thî

tē-'ā-khēl kōl+hā-'ā-rēts.

➤BOOK NOTICES.◀

GESENIUS' LEXICON.*

The last two editions of this standard work have been prepared by the Dorpat Professors Mühlau and Volck. The changes introduced in the first of their editions (the eighth in the whole series) were characterized by Prof. Robertson Smith as "not all of them improvements." Dissatisfaction has been more pronounced since the appearance of the last—ninth—edition. First Professor Siegfried devotes over nine columns of the *Theol. Literaturzeitung* to the subject and then Lagarde occupies a whole number of the *Goettingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* with it. A comical turn is given to the procedure by the protest of the editors in reply to Siegfried, which protest amounts only to the assurance that they must express their indignation at his strictures. A dignified silence would have been better for them.

The influence of party feeling is probably to be taken into account in judging such a controversy. The Dorpat theologians are conservative Lutherans of the school of *von Hoffmann*. Their critics are pronounced liberals. Gesenius himself was a rationalist, and Messrs. Siegfried and Lagarde feel that his great work ought not to receive a color which its author would not have given it. In this they are to some extent correct. Gesenius' own work, which has been acceptable to two generations of scholars of all shades of opinions, shows how little one's theological standpoint need interfere with his critical and linguistic study. Until we come to a *biblico-theological* lexicon of the Old Testament, there should be no reason to inquire into the theological views of our lexicographers. If then Mühlau and Volck have been one-sided it is a mistake. A biblico-theological lexicon seems far away in the future.

More serious is the charge made by Prof. Siegfried that the Massoretic text is not used by the authors in its most correct form, especially that Baer's edition of Genesis, Psalms, etc., has not been consulted often enough. A lexicon of the Massoretic text should certainly be based on the Massora. If this text were faith-

* Gesenius' (Wilhelm) Hebraeisches und Chaldaeisches Handwoerterbuch ueber das Alte Testament. Neunte vielfach umgearbeitete Auflage von Prof. F. Muehlau und W. Volck. Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel. 1883. xlvî, 978 pp. Large 8vo.